



2W



Robert G Sawers
5 South Villas
London NW1 9BS
01-267 3316
Rare Books and Oriental Art

The Committee on Publications of The Grolier Club certifies that this copy of *A Descriptive Catalogue of an Exhibition of Japanese Figure Prints from Moronobu to Toyokuni* is one of an edition of three hundred copies, printed on Van Gelder Zonen paper, at The Gilliss Press. The presswork was completed in the month of April, 1924.

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS
FROM
MORONOBU TO TOYOKUNI



A DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE
OF AN EXHIBITION OF
JAPANESE
FIGURE PRINTS
FROM
MORONOBU TO TOYOKUNI
BY
LOUIS V. LEDOUX



NEW YORK
THE GROLIER CLUB
1924

Copyright, 1924, by
The Grolier Club of the
City of New York

CONTENTS

	PAGE
LIST OF PLATES	ix
PREFACE	xi
CATALOGUE	I



LIST OF PLATES

PLATE		CATALOGUE NUMBER	FACING PAGE
FRONTISPIECE	HARUNOBU	No. 21 . . .	<i>Title</i>
PLATE I	MITSunObU	No. 3 . . .	6
PLATE II	KIYOMASU	No. 4 . . .	8
PLATE III	KIYONOBU	No. 7 . . .	10
PLATE IV	TOYONOBU	No. 13 . . .	16
PLATE V	TOYONOBU	No. 14 . . .	18
PLATE VI	MASANObU	No. 15 . . .	20
PLATE VII	KIYOHIRO	No. 16 . . .	22
PLATE VIII	KIYOMITSU	No. 17 . . .	24
PLATE IX	KIYOMITSU	No. 18 . . .	26
PLATE X	KIYOMITSU	No. 19 . . .	28
PLATE XI	HARUNObU	No. 32 . . .	30
PLATE XII	HARUSHIGE	No. 36 . . .	32
PLATE XIII	SHUNSHŌ	No. 42 . . .	36
PLATE XIV	SHUNSHŌ	No. 44 . . .	38

LIST OF PLATES

PLATE		CATALOGUE NUMBER	FACING PAGE
PLATE XV	SHUNSHŌ	No. 49 . . .	40
PLATE XVI	SHUNKŌ	No. 54 . . .	42
PLATE XVII	SHUNKŌ	No. 55 . . .	44
PLATE XVIII	SHUNYEI	No. 58 . . .	46
PLATE XIX	SHUNYEI	No. 59 . . .	48
PLATE XX	SHUNYEI	No. 60 . . .	50
PLATE XXI	SHUNYEI	No. 61 . . .	52
PLATE XXII	KORIUSAI	No. 72 . . .	54
PLATE XXIII	SHIGEMASA	No. 74 . . .	56
PLATE XXIV	KIYONAGA	No. 77 . . .	58
PLATE XXV	KIYONAGA	No. 82 . . .	62
PLATE XXVI	TOYOKUNI	No. 121 . . .	84
PLATE XXVII	TOYOKUNI	No. 124 . . .	86
PLATE XXVIII	TOYOKUNI	No. 125 . . .	88

PREFACE

By the middle of our seventeenth century, when the ancient feudal wars of Japan had become legends and the country had been long at peace, the prosperous middle classes of the capital and, to a certain extent, of the whole Empire had begun to demand self-expression in art. They were comparatively rich, they felt secure, they were light-hearted, bent upon pleasure. Poetry they had, and the minor arts; but painting, sculpture and the theatre were in the service of the Buddhist church or of the nobles—a condition not to be tolerated by a nation which, it may be claimed, was more keen in its æsthetic appreciation than any other that had been in the world since Athens fell,—when once the great body of the people had become rich enough, settled enough to get what it wanted. From the earlier marionette shows a popular theatre was developed that became the national passion; a popular school of painting sprang into being, gathering to itself and expanding certain phases of earlier Japanese art; and this school, disregarding the canons of classical painting, unmindful of the Buddhist

PREFACE

spiritualities, or treating them with scant reverence, concerned itself solely with the glamor of daily existence, the joy of life, the beauty of the present world. The chosen medium of this school was the color print. Prints were made cheaply and sold by thousands. They served the purpose of our Sunday Supplements. They depicted the popular actors in favorite rôles, the famous courtesans,—a class of women who appear to have been often of exquisite cultivation, much like the Greek *hetæraë*. They were used as fashion plates; the country gentlemen who were obliged by law to come up to the capital once a year, the merchants who came in from outlying districts, took them home to show the people in their native villages the styles of the hour, the gay life of the city. They were the “Vogue” and “Theatre Magazine” of their time; but they were as well marvels of line and color, marvels of technical achievement, so filled with a sense of the joy and beauty of life, preserving with such passionate intensity, such sensitive appreciation each ephemeral loveliness, that they have won a place apart in the art of the world and in the affections of those who are familiar with them.

It is not for a catalogue to discuss the influence of Japanese prints on modern European painting, or to point out wherein they resemble, or differ from, the earlier art of the West. It is necessary, however, to outline briefly, as they are reached, the stages of technical development. The de-

PREFACE

tails of the process have been described in many books.

Whenever a reproduction of the actual print exhibited has been published, the reference is given. Whenever other impressions of the prints shown have been reproduced, the effort has been made to refer to the most important or most easily accessible book or catalogue in which the subject appears—the series of Vignier-Inada Catalogues, published in Paris, usually being taken as the standard. When there is no reference to a reproduction of a print or subject, it may be inferred that none has been found; and in selecting, from among the two hundred and fifty prints exhibited by the Grolier Club, forty-two for reproduction in these catalogues, the choice has been confined to those subjects which have not been reproduced hitherto, or have been reproduced only in very obscure places. The negatives have not been retouched, so that the reproductions show the actual qualities of impression and condition of the prints. Sizes are given in inches.

No one could write about Japanese Prints without being under direct and constant obligation to Mr. Frederick W. Gookin, who has made a long and special study of the subject—particularly of the actor prints. The compiler of this catalogue has had the advantage not only of Mr. Gookin's published writings but of years of friendly correspondence and conversation as well.

PREFACE

To another friend, Mr. Kihachiro Matsuki of Kamakura, student of prints, lover and preserver of the poetry and legend of his land, almost equal obligation should be acknowledged. During happy hours passed with Mr. Matsuki the writer gained some insight into the meaning of prints, some knowledge of the quaint lore and romantic story that form their obvious background to a Japanese.

To these names it is a pleasure to add that of Mr. Shigeyoshi Obata, the distinguished translator of Li Po, who has given kind assistance in connection with the interpretation of poems.

L. V. L.

CATALOGUE

CATALOGUE

INK-PRINTS

All Japanese prints are from wood blocks, and in the earlier ones exhibited, which are known as *sumi-ye*, or ink prints, one block alone was used—black outlines being printed on white paper to make the picture. Later, in the so-called “Brocade Pictures” of many colors, a separate block was cut for each color, so that the black outline impression from what had come to be known as the key block, sometimes received impressions from more than twenty-five other blocks before the finished print was obtained.

I MORONOBU (Ca. 1625–1695)

A *samurai* and his sweetheart seated. Another woman at the right, at the left a burning candle in a tall stand. On the floor is a writing box with brushes, and beside it is an erotic poem by Narihira, a celebrity of the 9th Century, who is as famous for his intrigues as for his verses. This print is an excellent example of Moronobu's power, but it does not show the equally characteristic archness and humor which are apparent in many of his faces—particularly in those of the

THE GROLIER CLUB

Kyoto set. It is unsigned, as is usual with Moronobu, and undated; but as the pattern of the woman's *obi*, or sash, and the style of hair arrangement reappear in the prints by the same artist that are reproduced in the Vignier-Inada Catalogue, Vol. I, No. 10, and the catalogue of the Field Collection, No. 12, it is likely that the three prints were made in the same year—perhaps about 1680. Fashions changed quickly in Yedo in those gay days and it was *de rigueur* for the courtesans, actors, and prosperous, pleasure-loving people of the middle class, who are shown in the prints, to follow them closely. The unidentified *mon*, or crest, of the lover appears in another print by Moronobu, which is reproduced in the French edition of Von Seidlitz, Plate 5. The print exhibited is reproduced in "Asia," August, 1923; Kurth reproduces part of the subject, spoiling the composition, in his "Japanische Holzschnitt," Plate 6.

Size $10\frac{3}{4}$ x $15\frac{1}{2}$.

2 OKUMURA MASANOBU (Ca. 1685-1768)

An example of Japanese wit, showing with what irreverent levity the public for whom prints were designed treated the solemn legends of old China. Incidentally it gives an excellent illustration of how much is lost by those who consider merely the decorative value of Japanese prints—their composition, line, and color—without attempting to discover the meaning. It is the over-tones

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

that we miss, just as a Japanese, who was not sufficiently conversant with Western thought, might see only line in a Daumier cartoon or a Descent from the Cross. The difficulty, however, of finding the ultimate, central meaning or even the connotations of almost any work of Japanese or Chinese art is immense, if not insuperable, for everything is stated indirectly, by implication or through hidden meanings; the artist being able to rely upon the quickness of perception of the spectator and his accumulation of traditional learning. Fortunately the allusion in this print is clear. Generations of Japanese children had been nursed on the typically Chinese story of a noble hermit sage whose solitary contemplation had been interrupted by a verbal message asking him to come back into the world of men and be Emperor. When the messenger had departed, the incorruptible one was found by his servant seated beside a waterfall busily washing from his ears the taint of what they had heard; and the tale of worldly temptation so shocked the servant that he led back an ox he had been about to water, refusing to let the beast drink of the polluted stream. It is a Chinese Sunday School story with an irreproachable Roman moral, but what do the Japanese—the Greeks of Asia—do with it? The print shows a gentleman, who is not a hermit, washing his ear, while a somewhat gay lady leads away her pet cat. Behind them, for sufficient caption, is depicted a classical paint-

THE GROLIER CLUB

ing of a waterfall drawn in the Chinese manner. Reproduced, Catalogue of Field Collection, No. 37.

The print is signed and sealed by Okumura Masanobu, and was published by Kikuya about 1715. Size $11\frac{3}{8}$ x $16\frac{1}{4}$.

3 HASEGAWA MITSUNOBU (worked from about 1720 to about 1755)

Two women in a room opening on a verandah. One, with toilet articles beside her, is arranging her hair before a low mirror, the other stands holding a box of face powder.

The massiveness of design and the bold brush strokes of Moronobu have yielded to the stately grace of such figures as these. In the work of the contemporary Sukenobu the grace has become sweetness and the stateliness is gone.

Hasegawa Mitsunobu was a painter whose few prints are excessively rare. He appears to have been born in Osaka and to have come later to Yedo. Books are recorded that were illustrated by him and were published from 1724 to 1754. He sometimes signed his work Braioken Eishun, or Shosuiken or Ryusuiken. The print exhibited probably appeared before 1735 and is the seventh sheet of a set of nine, four of which are in New York, the last being signed Ryusuiken Hasegawa Mitsunobu. No print by this artist appears to have been previously reproduced.

Size $10\frac{1}{2}$ x 15. (Plate I).



PLATE I

PRINTS COLORED BY HAND

Almost from the beginning some impressions of the black and white ink-prints had been colored by hand; but as the art of printing developed and prints became popular, hand coloring became the rule rather than the exception, and was done much more carefully, either by the artist himself or under his direction. At first a dull orange, called *tan*, was the only pigment applied, but soon other colors were added, the total effect frequently being heightened by the use of gold powder and black lacquer.

4 KIYOMASU (?-1764)

Monaka reading. A *Tan-ye*, or print colored by hand with dull orange. A greenish yellow has been used in other parts of the design.

Monaka, a famous public beauty of her time, whose name and address are given, stands in her gorgeous robes reading a poem, only the essential part of which is visible to us:

Life is full of trouble, but the plum-
blossoms by the window

The poem, and indeed the whole print, is significant of the extent to which the gentle aestheticism and delicate appreciation of nature that had come through the influence of Zen Buddhism had influenced even the lower classes. The nobles had paintings done in Chinese ink, in

THE GROLIER CLUB

which the spiritual significance of the subject—quality in it that was eternal—was indicated by a few brush-strokes; the people had prints like this.

The tying of the *obi*, or sash, in front indicates the station of the wearer, but these women were creatures of exquisite culture, trained in all the amenities of life; and while elopement with one of them was apt to lead to a double suicide, they were not looked down upon as they have been at other times and in other lands. Comparison with Athens is again inevitable.

There is a peculiar stateliness about this design, a bigness in a small space, that is somewhat unusual. The print was published by Yamakichi probably about 1715, and is attributed with considerable confidence to the young Kiyomasu, though certain critics have tended to consider it the work of Moroshige, or the first Kiyonobu, or some member of the Kwaigetsudo group. It has been reproduced in color as the frontispiece of the 1922 edition of "The Book of Tea."

Size $12\frac{1}{2}$ x 6. (Plate II).

5 KONDO KIYOHARU (worked Ca. 1715-1735)

A Buddhist nun, or possibly the actor Sanjo Kantaro in the rôle of a Buddhist nun, carrying a box. The large shade hat is sprinkled with gold powder.

This print was probably issued about 1718. It is unsigned but is attributed to Kondo Kiyō-



PLATE II

KIYOMASU NO. 4

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

haru because of certain characteristics of drawing which seem to distinguish his work from that of the equally rare artist, Kondo Katsunobu, to whom otherwise the attribution might be made. Formerly in the Jaekel Collection, this print was reproduced in color by Münsterberg, Vol. III, p. 318.

Size $12\frac{1}{4}$ x $5\frac{3}{4}$.

6 KIYONOBU FIRST (1664-1729)

The actor, Ichikawa Monnosuke the first, in the rôle of an exhibitor of trained monkeys.

The names of actors went on from generation to generation, being given to adopted sons when there were no descendants capable of bearing them with sufficient distinction. In some cases the new bearer of a name that had lapsed was chosen by vote of his peers, and actors changed their names and identifying *mon*, or crests, with bewildering frequency. Sometimes it is only by the surprisingly exact portraiture that came into vogue with the actor prints of a slightly later date that it is possible to tell which generation is depicted.

This print, which is unusually fine in line and color, as well as in condition, must have appeared between 1719, when the first Monnosuke adopted the *mon* shown, and 1729 when he, as well as the artist, died. There is no dispute as to the attribution.

In this Catalogue the attempt has not always

THE GROLIER CLUB

been made to distinguish between different generations of actors of the same name, the Exhibition being intended primarily for those who are not specialists in the subject. If these notes help some to understand and appreciate, they will have served their sole purpose. The human background of Japanese prints should be of interest to all, the erudite historical problems connected with them are for specialists alone.

Print reproduced, "Asia," August, 1923.

Subject reproduced in color, Plate No. 16 of the unfinished work by Barboutau (1914) which was interrupted by his death.

Size $13\frac{1}{4}$ x $6\frac{1}{4}$.

7 KIYONOBU FIRST

The actor Tatsuoka Hisagiku, as a woman carrying on a small stand the conventional decoration for a wedding ceremony, which is made up of the four symbols of longevity—the pine, the peach, the crane, the tortoise.

On account of various scandals which culminated in a celebrated murder, it became the law that no woman should appear on the stage. In prints, the actors are always men; the illusion, however, is perfect, as, except for the artificial voice to which one grows quickly accustomed, it is perfect in the Japanese theatre of to-day. When a boy was born in an actor's family, his parents decided quickly whether he should play male or female parts, and his training was in accordance with



JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

their decision. Everything in women's rôles is played differently, even to all the gestures; and actors trained from childhood for these parts achieve an astonishing grace of carefully thought out rhythmic motion.

Print reproduced in the Catalogue of the Kinbei Murata Sale of September, 1918.

Signed Torii Kiyonobu and published by Murataya, probably about the same date as the preceding number.

Size 12 x 6. (Plate III).

8 SHIGENAGA (1697-1756)

The actor Arashi Wakano, as a woman under an umbrella walking in the snow and turning to look at the blossoms on a gnarled tree. In Japan, blossoms and snow actually are seen together, the rose camelias are bright under the first soft snow of autumn, and the blooms come on the plum trees before winter has begun to turn toward spring. The curious decoration of the outer kimono is formed of miniature portraits of some of the Thirty-six Famous Poets, of whom Narihira (see note on Number 1.) was one. These thirty-six poets were a favorite subject of art, their names and their verses being familiar to all. Reproduced as No. 25 in the Catalogue of the Frederick May Collection.

The print is signed by Shigenaga and was published by Igaya about 1725.

Size $13\frac{1}{4}$ x $6\frac{7}{8}$.

9 OKUMURA MASANOBU

A man and a woman in a room watching a youth who is about to write. Note the position of the brush and hand, so different from the Occidental one. Painting, which was closely akin to the equally prized art of calligraphy, was done in the same manner. In the foreground are a writing box with its slab of black Chinese ink, and a smoking box with a pipe that would hold the usual three puffs of tobacco which are so dear to the Japanese. Opium smoking was never practised in Japan. Behind the group of people are a saké pot, a cup on a stand, and a tray of food with chopsticks. The rear wall is decorated with a lovely snow landscape; and on the left is a poem of the short seventeen-syllable form, written by the artist, which refers to a particularly dainty small plum that is nicknamed, by way of humor, after those gigantic and grotesque guardians of the temple gates—called *Nio*, and really is a love poem in disguise. The allusions in the print are not wholly clear. The subject is reproduced in the V. I. Catalogue, Vol. I., No. 141, but from an impression that lacks the signature and seal.

Signed and sealed by Masanobu.

Date probably a little later than that of Number 2 by the same artist.

Size $9\frac{3}{4}$ x $14\frac{1}{4}$

10 TOSHINOBU (worked Ca. 1725–1742)

A dandy of more than questionable morals out

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

walking on a cold day. His umbrella, which bears the characters wishing long life, is sprinkled with gold and he is mounted on *geta*, or pattens, high enough to protect him from any depth of mud or slush. The heavy outer coat that he wears is decorated with the *mon* of various popular actors. The similarity in the names of many of the print designers is because a pupil was given, as a sort of diploma, when he became proficient enough, the right to adopt a part of his master's studio name. The man who called himself, as an artist, Masanobu was the teacher as well as the father of Toshinobu. This rule has many notable exceptions, for there are similarities of sound that have nothing to do with the studio in which an artist received his training.

Toshinobu appears to have died young; while his father, Masanobu, lived on to a ripe old age, producing many designs that were printed in two colors, and even surviving to the beginning of the polychrome period.

This print probably appeared about 1725, and probably is an early Toshinobu showing the influence of his father. It was formerly in the Jaekel Collection and was reproduced in color by Münsterberg, Vol. III, p. 319, who attributed it to Masanobu.

Size $12\frac{1}{2}$ x 6.

11 KIYOMASU

A later print than Number 4, by the same artist.

THE GROLIER CLUB

Sanjo Kantaro, as a woman arranging her hair before a lacquer mirror. He is in the rôle of Yao-ya O Shichi, a grocer's daughter, who, when her father's house burned down, was sent to stay in a temple where she promptly fell in love with a young student. On her return home she set fire to the recently completed new house in the hope of being sent back to her lover; but was unfortunate enough to choose a windy day so that half the town burned. There was a prompt investigation and the lady was executed—to become thereafter a heroine of romance.

The original creator of the part made such a success in it that in revivals of the play his *mon*—a sealed letter—was used by the leading actor with his own, and eventually came to be an indication of the rôle.

The decorations on the robe represent wooden clappers strung together to be hung in the wind and frighten birds from the rice-fields; they are the Japanese equivalent of our scare-crows.

This print is known to be by Kiyomasu because the impression in the Vever Collection, which is reproduced by Von Seidlitz, French Edition, Plate 10, bears his signature.

Date about 1725.

Size $12\frac{3}{4}$ x $5\frac{3}{4}$.

12 TOYONOBU (1711-1785)

The two end sheets of a triptych representing the "Beauties of the Three Cities," Kyoto, Osaka,

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

and Yedo (now called Tokyo). The color effect is greatly heightened by the use of lacquer and gold powder.

These prints were published by Maruya and are signed Nishimura Magosaburo, a signature which has recently been discovered to be an early one of the great Toyonobu, who also signed in his youth Shigenobu; the two earlier signatures being found on prints that appeared between 1730 and 1743. The triptych of which these are a part must have been printed nearer to the earlier than to the later of the dates given.

Size of each sheet $12\frac{1}{2} \times 6$.

EXPERIMENTS IN COLOR PRINTING

Shortly after 1740, it was discovered that by the use of a simple device to insure perfect register, two color blocks could be added to the black-outline keyblock, the sheet on which the finished print was to appear being pressed on each of these in turn. These two-color prints are called *Beni-ye* because *beni*—a somewhat evanescent rose—always was used, the other color being at first green and afterwards either green or blue. A little later a third block was added, but was not always used; and, as experiments in over-printing were made, the range of color was greatly increased, before the final development of full polychrome printing, about 1764 and 1765.

13 TOYONOBU

An example of the two-color prints of an artist whose earlier hand-colored work is shown as Number 12.

This print was issued for the revival of another famous play, "The Revenge of the Soga Brothers," a story of vendetta coming down from the period of the twelfth century feudal wars, that holds its place on the stage to-day.

Japan is the only important nation in the present world whose legendary and heroic past lives in the hearts of the people, as familiar to them as were the legends of Troy and Thebes to the audiences for whom Æschylus and Sophocles wrote. It is as though the stories of King Arthur, the death of Roland, the Crusades, the Wars of the Roses, were so vital a part of our imaginative outlook that we would pack the theatres, year after year, to see them produced.

The Soga brothers accomplished their revenge and died tragically, both in early youth. The poem on the print reads: "Youthful Brothers, comparable only to young maples in early leaf." For the way to identify the Soga brothers in prints see note under Number 48. The actors here are Onoe Kikiyorō (right) as Soga no Gorō, and Ichimura Kamizō as Soga no Jurō. The drama was "Nannakura Wakayagi Soga, and was performed at the Ichimura Theatre, Yedo, in the first month of Eukyō Isire (February, 1742).

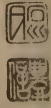


春のふれ
尾上菊之助

兄弟
あまのふれ

若様の十良
市村無病

曲
篠堂
石川秀絶
豊信
圖



通油町 豊仙堂 乃屋

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

Signed by Toyonobu and published by Maruko in 1744.

Size $15 \times 11\frac{1}{4}$. (Plate IV).

14 TOYONOBU

Nakamura Kiyozō as a girl called Matsuyama (Pine mountain), and Ichimura Kamezō as an attendant holding her umbrella. At least the lower *mon* on the right sleeve of Kiyozō appears to have been put in by a plug in the block, perhaps to replace that of an actor who died during the run of the play.

Subject reproduced, "Estampes appartenant à un Amateur de l'Étranger." Paris, Hotel Drouot, June 14, 1909, No. 20.

Compare Moslé Catalogue, No. 1878.

Signed and sealed by Toyonobu and published by Urokogataya probably between 1748 and 1750. Size $16\frac{3}{4} \times 12$. (Plate V).

15 MASANOBU

Numbers 2 and 9 in this exhibition show earlier work of the long-lived Masanobu, the first in black and white only, and the second hand-colored. Neither one compares in beauty of line with this two-color print, and the soft fading by time of its characteristic rose and green has given it an added charm all its own.

The print was issued in 1750 for another revival of the play described under Number 11, and shows the fair incendiary strolling with her lover, while music is the food of love. The instrument

THE GROLIER CLUB

in her hand is a *samisen*, or Japanese banjo, and his a *kokyu*, or three-stringed fiddle. Note the sealed letter—a reminder once again of the original creator of the rôle.

The poem on the print reads:

Here in Sacred Ise, where the cherry is always
in bloom, we find our hill of happy meeting.

Signed and sealed by Masanobu.

Size 16 x 11 $\frac{1}{4}$. (Plate VI).

16 KIYOHIO (worked Ca. 1745–1758)

Segawa Kikunojō I and II were the most famous and most exquisitely depicted of all actors of women's rôles. Each was the popular idol of his time, and the head—at least of Kikunojō I, must have been turned by it, for here beside his portrait he writes a poem, signed with his personal name—Roko, in which he says: "As a woman he has as many admirers as the flowers"—the admiration of flowers being, of course, a universal characteristic of the Japanese. Doubtless the statement was true; but in our Western world of newspapers and press agents, actors can blush with surprise when they hear such things said by others. Kikunojō's *mon*—a sheaf of cotton—is the chief decoration of his costume; there can be no mistake about who he is. The composition is of extreme grace and one can imagine with what consummate art an actor who wore his clothes so well and had such clothes to



JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

wear, would move about the stage, managing the undulating line of the draperies.

Print reproduced, Kinbei Murata Catalogue of September, 1917, No. 22.

Signed and sealed by Kiyohiro and published by Yamamoto, about 1748.

Size 15 x 7. (Plate VII).

17 KIYOMITSU (1735-1785)

The actor Sanogawa Ichimatsu holding a long pipe and standing beside a bench on which is his smoking box.

The actor is in the rôle of one of the Soga brothers whose tragic story is outlined in the note on Number 13. The way to recognize the Soga brothers in prints is described under Number 48.

This one is Soga no Gorô.

Signed Torii Kiyomitsu.

Size $12\frac{3}{8}$ x $5\frac{1}{2}$. (Plate VIII).

This and the two following prints by Kiyomitsu may be dated roughly between 1760 and 1770. Prints in two and three colors continued to be made for some years after the invention of polychrome printing.

18 KIYOMITSU

The actor Adzuma Tozo as a woman under a maple, carrying bird cages.

Signed by Kiyomitsu and published by Nishimura.

Size $12\frac{1}{4}$ x $5\frac{1}{2}$. (Plate IX).

19 KIYOMITSU

The actor Yamashita Kinsaku as a woman with blossoms in her hair, carrying a blossoming branch, from which is suspended a foot-ball. Foot-ball in Japan was a much more stately game than it is with us and was played in flowing garments of brocade.

Signed by Kiyomitsu.

Size $12\frac{1}{4}$ x $5\frac{1}{2}$. (Plate X).

20 KIYOMITSU, KIYOTSUNE (worked Ca. 1756-1775) and HARUNOBU (born about 1730, died 1770)

"The Beauties of Three Cities," done by three different artists. (For the subject compare No. 12.) Behind the three girls are shown the three flowers that are associated with the cities, and each wears the *mon* of a favorite actor. Above each is a love poem.

This triptych must have appeared about the time of the perfecting of polychrome printing by Harunobu, the great name of the period between 1764 and the date of his untimely death; but as two of its three sheets are by artists of the preceding period, the last of the "Primitives," it serves very well to mark the transition between the two- and three-color prints and the real "Brocade Pictures," besides being in itself a thing of peculiar loveliness.

Print reproduced as No. 83 of the F. W. Hunter

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

Catalogue, with the sheets arranged in the wrong order.

Signed by the three artists.

Date about 1765.

Size $12\frac{3}{4}$ x $16\frac{1}{2}$.

The period of the "Primitives" is ended. We pass now to the work of artists each of whom will be considered by himself.

HARUNOBU (born about 1730, died 1770)

Harunobu, who disputes with three very different artists, Kiyonaga, Sharaku, and Utamaro, the claim to first rank among the designers of figure prints of the popular school, unfortunately died young. His work before 1764 is little known and of little distinction, but between that date and his death in 1770 he produced an immense number of designs that are most beautiful in themselves and, because of a peculiar quality that is in them, have endeared him to the heart of the world. He is the artist of young girlhood, the poet of youth. His figures, untouched by sorrow, move through an earthly paradise, a fairyland of loveliness, the world that might be rather than the world that is. He has caught and rendered for us the evanescent charm of youth; he has sought to preserve, with the freshness of the morning on it, that fleeting moment between the opening of the bud and the fall of

THE GROLIER CLUB

the first petal, in which alone beauty is perfect, unalloyed. Harunobu did not have the stateliness of Kiyonaga, the sardonic power of Sharaku, nor the range of Utamaro; he turned away from the theatre, was, in the main, unmindful of the *demi-monde*; what he did have, he had supremely—his vision of the spring-time of life and love.

All of the fifteen prints by Harunobu in this Exhibition can be dated between 1764 and 1770; most of them were done before 1767. They have been selected with sorrow and misgiving from about seventy available examples, and, fortunately, it is not necessary to discuss in connection with them the vexed, irrelevant questions of scholarship. In the earlier ones the color-scheme is more simple, with a delicate yellow predominating.

21 HARUNOBU

Young lovers playing a flute. Behind them is a screen decorated with pine branches. The bamboo leaves in the decoration of the girl's gown are so arranged as to give the numerals of the Japanese year equivalent to our 1765. This year was the nine hundredth anniversary of the entrance of Michizane—a statesman, scholar and artist of old—to the court of the Emperor, and a number of so-called calendar prints were designed toward the close of 1764 and issued at the beginning of the New Year as part of the popular

瀬川菊之丞 露考

以 見 負 者

死

夢 中

うで 娘

鳥居清廣

本板

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

celebration of the event. (See Grolier Club: Catalogue of Japanese Landscape Prints, Number 8.) No other impression of this print appears to have survived.

The seal is that of a collector.

Size $10 \times 7\frac{3}{8}$. (Frontispiece).

22 HARUNOBU

A young girl as Moso. This is another calendar print of the same year, the numerals being found among the bamboo leaves.

Moso, one of "The Twenty-four Paragons of Filial Piety" of Chinese moralizing, went out barefoot in winter to search for young bamboo shoots, a table delicacy for which his aged mother craved, and was rewarded by having them sprout miraculously through the snow. The story, of course, was thoroughly familiar to the Japanese, but Moso is represented here by a young girl.

Subject reproduced, Blanchard Catalogue, No. 7, and, from a much trimmed impression, Hayashi Catalogue, p. 168.

Size $11\frac{1}{8} \times 8\frac{3}{8}$.

23 HARUNOBU

A young girl seated in a boat under drooping willow branches. She wears a long court hat of the olden time and has beside her a small drum—one of the classical instruments used from of old. The reference is to the pleasure boat wherein a Shogun of a by-gone age had

THE GROLIER CLUB

been wont to escape the cares of government in the company of his mistress, the beautiful Asazuma. A Shogun was a prime minister who had usurped the secular power of the Emperor but not the Imperial name.

Print reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. II, No. 72. Some of the too heavy oxidization has been removed.

Size 11 x 8 $\frac{1}{4}$.

24 HARUNOBU

Two young women walking through a storm of snow and rain on their way to a bath house. One carries a towel and a bath robe.

Bathing is one of the national passions of the Japanese, and in the late afternoons the streets are filled with people returning from the bathing establishments.

Subject reproduced, Morrison Catalogue of Exhibition held by Fine Art Society of London, 1910, No. 68; Crewdson Catalogue, No. 31, and, in color, Vol. I, Plate 16, of the Catalogue of Japanese Prints, owned by the Louvre.

Signed Suzuki Harunobu.

Size 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 8 $\frac{1}{8}$.

25 HARUNOBU

A young girl on a verandah stands alone, against the black background of night, lighting with her lantern the white blossoms of a plum tree in early bloom. It has been pointed out already that the



JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

Japanese are devoted to flowers. When the different blooms are at their finest, parties go out by day and night to view them, and the plum is the earliest blossom of the year—the harbinger of Spring.

Print reproduced, Kinbei Murata Catalogue of October, 1919, No. 41.

Subject reproduced with some variations, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. II, No. 66.

Size $12\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{8}$.

26 HARUNOBU

A girl and a woman shaping, over lacquer forms with dome-shaped tops, floss silk that has been pressed into sheets.

The perfection of technique in the cutting of the blocks and in the printing is extraordinary.

This and the two following numbers are from a set of "Eight Indoor Views." In their first state these eight prints bear the signature of Kiosen, who may have been an amateur engraver and printer, and almost certainly was a patron for whom prints were designed—the moving spirit in an artist's club or society that issued them. The so-called "second state," of which three examples are shown, has no signature, and the characteristic yellow or straw color of early Harunobus has been supplanted by stronger tones. In a third state, that frequently bears the signature of Harunobu, the color scheme is still more complicated.

THE GROLIER CLUB

The Catalogue of the Exhibition of the Japan Society of New York reproduces in color all three states of one sheet of the set. All eight, in the first state, are reproduced in the Moslé Catalogue and in the second state—like those shown here—in the Harunobu Memorial Catalogue.

Size $11\frac{1}{8} \times 8\frac{1}{8}$.

27 HARUNOBU

A young woman reading by the light of a portable lamp. From the same set as the last. It has been said that prints in which a good deal of black was used and prints in which the figures were not displayed against a complicated background were apt to be finer than others. This print, which is one of Harunobu's most charming designs, illustrates the first rule and is a notable exception to the second. The stream, the shore and the maple leaves give exactly what was needed.

Subject reproduced as stated above.

Size $11\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$.

28 HARUNOBU

A young girl with open fan, followed by her maid, From the same set as Numbers 26 and 27, and of the same state.

Subject reproduced as stated above, and also in the V. I. Catalogue, Vol. II. No. 80.

Size $11\frac{1}{4} \times 8$.



PLATE IX

29 HARUNOBU

Stealing the Blossoms. A young girl has climbed up on the back of her maid to reach a tempting branch of plum-blossoms above a gray wall.

In the upper classes long sleeves were the prerogative of youth, and from childhood to age they grew steadily shorter. Servants wore short sleeves, as in this print and Number 28; long ones would have interfered with their work.

Subject reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. II, No. 115.

Size $10\frac{3}{4}$ x $7\frac{7}{8}$.

The nine prints by Harunobu that have been catalogued thus far can be dated with considerable confidence between New Year's Day of 1765 and the close of 1767. The six that follow should probably be ascribed to the final two and a half years of the artist's life.

30 HARUNOBU

Young lovers beside a green bamboo fence. The youth is stooping over to remove a clog of snow from the *geta*, or patten, of the girl. Above are some verses:

Even today snow makes the road well-nigh impassable; if it should storm again tomorrow who could expect him to come?

THE GROLIER CLUB

Print reproduced in color, Transactions of the Grolier Club, Part III.

Signed Suzuki Harunobu. Probable date 1768.

Size $11\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{3}{8}$.

31 HARUNOBU

A young girl and her maid on a wind-swept beach. The young lady's companion, perhaps pleading for a rejected lover, points to a rock against which the waves are beating, while above is a well-known classical poem by Minamoto no Shigeyuki, which, with due regard to the implied meaning understood by the Japanese, might be interpreted:

My heart is like a wave
Broken against the rock of her denial.

There is an inference in this poem that, though each wave is broken, in the end the rock itself is worn away.

These verses are in the thirty-one-syllable form, for when the Japanese wish to write a long poem and say a great deal they add two lines, of seven syllables each, to the short seventeen-syllable form, referred to under Number 9; the construction being like that of a sonnet with a distinct break and change of thought in a specified place. Subject reproduced, Harunobu Memorial Catalogue, No. 90; Frederick May Catalogue, No. 567, and Sotheby Catalogue of January, 1911—An Importer of Japanese Products, No. 60.



PLATE X

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

Signed Suzuki Harunobu. Probable date 1768.
Size $11\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$.

32 HARUNOBU

A young lady who received so many love-letters that she was obliged to have an ox carry them for her. The background of evanescent blue that was in many of Harunobu's prints is here only partially decomposed.

This print is described in the V. I. Catalogue Vol. II, No. 217, and the subject is reproduced in the Kinbei Murata Catalogue of July, 1913. Probable date 1769.

Size $10\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$. (Plate XI).

33 HARUNOBU

Young lovers walking under snow-laden willow branches. This is one of Harunobu's finest designs, an exquisite print in every line from the drooping branches above to the bottom sweep of the moving draperies. The Japanese call it the "Crow and Heron," probably because the youth is dressed in black, while the girl's outer kimono is white with patterning in *gauffrage*. A later—less effective—state shows a black bounding line about the soft snow on top of the umbrella, with changes in the patterns of the textiles.

The print exhibited was reproduced in color as the frontispiece of the Catalogue of the Exhibition given by the Japan Society of New York in 1911; the state with the black bounding line

and changed patterns may best be compared in the reproduction in the Hayashi Catalogue, p. 110; and there is still a third, badly engraved and with other differences.

Signed Suzuki Harunobu. Probable date 1769.
Size $11\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{8}$.

34 and 35 HARUNOBU

Pillar prints, representing that pair of star-crossed lovers, Shirai Gompachi and Komurasaki, each in *komuso* attire, and carrying the basket hat and flute.

Prints of this shape were made to be hung as decorations on the square wooden pillars of Japanese houses, and having been more frequently exposed to the light, are difficult to find in the condition of these. The story of the unfortunate lovers is too long to be retold here, but those who desire to read a digest of it may be referred to Joly's "Legend in Japanese Art," p. 98. A few lines, however, must be given to explaining the word *komuso*. A *komuso* originally was a person of the warrior class who for some reason had fallen into disgrace and taken sanctuary in a monastery. When he wandered abroad the deep basket hat prevented recognition and the flute furnished a means of subsistence; besides which the civil authorities hesitated to interfere with an unidentified person who could be seen at a glance to have put himself under the protection of the Church. The costume, however,



PLATE XI

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

became a convenient one—particularly the hat—for people who wished to escape justice or to go about incognito, and apparently it was used often by those who had much less reason than Gompachi for wishing to conceal their identity. Even today the *komuso* sometimes is seen, and no one would think of being rude enough to discover by force the identity of a person who wished to remain unknown. Sometimes, in prints, a girl upon whom a *komuso* is calling, will hold out a mirror or bowl of water to catch a reflection of the hidden face; but that was a woman's trick, which doubtless was pardoned.

The Gompachi measures $28\frac{1}{8}$ x 5 and was reproduced in the Catalogue of the first Metzgar Sale, 1916, No. 276. It is a famous impression of a famous print.

The Komurasaki measures $27\frac{1}{2}$ x 5. The subject is reproduced in the Van Caneghem Catalogue, No. 204.

Both prints are signed. The probable date of their publication is the early part of 1770, a few weeks before the artist's death.

HARUSHIGE

Little is known of this artist save that he made good pictures; but much is conjectured. He may have been a son or pupil of Harunobu, his may be an early signature of Koriūsai's; and, for the confusion of critics, a talented reprobate named Shiba

Kokan, who was a few years younger than Harunobu and lived much longer, left memoirs to be published after his death, in which he states not only that he was Harushige but calls particular attention to the fact—if fact it be—that many of the best-known prints attributed to, and even signed, Harunobu had been made by himself, the master's signature having been forged to fool the public or to make the prints sell. Shiba Kokan appears to have been perfectly capable of playing a posthumous joke on posterity for his own glory and our confusion; on the other hand he proved himself to have been an artist of very genuine talent whether he was working in the Japanese way or experimenting in European perspective and copper-plate engraving after the manner of prints brought by Dutch traders to the open port of Nagasaki. Those who think they can tell Shiba Kokan Harunobus from real Harunobus claim that the figures in the former have longer, thinner necks. There are, however, prints signed Harushige in which the necks are more short and round than those in the one exhibited.

36 HARUSHIGE

A scene in a restaurant beside a river, two girls in front; through the partially open *shoji* (sliding paper partitions) are seen the shadows of the guests, one of whom has broken a hole through the *shoji* to look at the girls. The name of the



JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

tea-house is given at the end of the poem above, which relates that the girls, touched by the melancholy of autumn, are disinclined to help entertain the guests.

Subject reproduced, Kinbei Murata Catalogue of October, 1911.

Signed Harushige.

Size $11\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$. (Plate XII).

BUNCHŌ (worked Ca. 1768-1775)

Bunchō, an artist of delicate line and a great colorist, stands a little apart from the men of his time; unrelated, individual. Mr. Ficke has developed an interesting, romantic theory about his sensitive personality, which may have little basis in fact but makes excellent reading. ("Chats on Japanese Prints," pp. 186-193.) Bunchō was of somewhat higher rank than most of the artists of the popular school, the great body of whom were distinctly of the lower classes for whom they worked. The red seal on his prints bears his family name, Mori. His color schemes are as different as his line from those of others.

37 BUNCHŌ

The comedian Arashi Otohachi wearing a farmer's hat and holding two fish by a cord.

Portraits of comedians are somewhat rare, the public apparently preferring for its souvenirs,

THE GROLIER CLUB

pictures of the tragic actors in their moments of tense dramatic passion.

Subject reproduced, Sotheby Catalogue of June 23, 1913, No. 32.

Signed and sealed by Bunchō.

Size $11\frac{3}{4}$ x $5\frac{5}{8}$.

38 BUNCHŌ

The actor Matsumoto Koshiro III who in 1770 became Danjuro V. A decoration of iris on his white under robe.

Signed and sealed by Bunchō.

Size $12\frac{1}{4}$ x $5\frac{3}{4}$.

39 BUNCHŌ

Iwai Hanshiro IV as Okaru in the seventh act of Chushingura. Note the characteristic richness of color and the equally characteristic distortion of the curiously poised, slim figure with its sweeping curve.

This is the first of the prints exhibited that has to do with the most famous and popular of all Japanese plays, the Chushingura, or Tale of the 47 Ronin, an excellent translation of which by Jukichi Inouye has been published in Tokyo. John Masefield has paraphrased—not very satisfactorily—a part of it in "The Faithful." (See notes, under Numbers 60, 67, 68, 71). The play is so popular that it has to be revived every year and the difficulty of getting a place is extreme. The best places are near the "Flower Walk"

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

or path raised above the pit by which the actors pass between the rear of the theatre and the stage—an arrangement made familiar to us by Rheinarth's production of "Sumurun." The actors frequently stop for posturing in the middle of the Flower Walk and he whose place is near them is a fortunate person. The floor of a Japanese theatre is divided into what look like cucumber frames, separated by two-inch railings. Into each of these frames which are theoretically six feet square (two mats) but actually are smaller, four spectators get, the Japanese having an inherited ability to fold themselves like pen-knives and remain shut for hours. Some performances of Chushingura begin at ten in the morning and continue until five in the afternoon, when they stop abruptly with the play unfinished, to make room for the evening performance of some other piece. The compiler has seen three productions of parts of this play, but never yet has he been fortunate enough to witness the death of the villain—and Moronao is the kind of a villain that one particularly likes to see die. When the company is a good one the acting is impressive and moving in the extreme, and the costumes are most effective with their beautiful stiff brocades in luminous folds of color.

Print reproduced, Frederick May Catalogue, No. 1125.

Signed and sealed by Bunchō.

Size $12\frac{3}{4}$ x $5\frac{1}{2}$.

40 BUNCHŌ

Chosan, a tea-house beauty, walking through a snow-storm with her attendants. In the upper corner is a letter addressed to the girl, "from one she knows."

Print reproduced by Ficke, Plate 22.

Signed and sealed by Bunchō.

Size $12\frac{3}{4}$ x 6.

41 BUNCHŌ

Nakamura Kiyozō as a woman on a snowy night, outside a closed gate. Black background.

An impression of the same subject, but apparently with a gray instead of a black sky, is reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. III, No. 148.

Signed and sealed by Bunchō.

Published by Nishimura.

Size $12\frac{1}{8}$ x $5\frac{3}{4}$.

SHUNSHŌ (1726-1793)

Katsukawa Shunshō, one of the most powerful and dramatic artists of the popular school, is unquestionably the greatest designer of actor prints—Sharaku, with his limited production and strong satiric tendency, standing somewhat apart. He was enormously productive; the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, for example, has over seven hundred prints by him; but like all artists who did a great deal of work, his quality is variable. Very few prints by Shunshō are



PLATE XIII

SHUNSHO NO. 42

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

poor, most are good to very good, all are interesting and many are so extraordinarily fine in their dramatic power as to make him without a peer in his special field. Shunshō has a secondary importance as the teacher of Shunkō and Shunyei, some of whose prints are exhibited, and of several other notable designers—among them Hokusai, whose signature on graduation from his master's studio was Shunrō. (See note on pupils' names under Number 10.)

42 SHUNSHŌ

The actor, Bando Matataro, dressed in black. Above him is an inscription in white giving a line from the play, which is of little interest to us but probably was spoken at the dramatic moment depicted.

Signed with Shunshō's jar seal which appears in this form chiefly on prints of his early period. Date about 1768.

Size $11\frac{7}{8} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$. (Plate XIII).

43 SHUNSHŌ

The hero Gompachi, Harunobu's representation of whom is shown as Number 34, is here represented by the actor Ichikawa Monnosuke. Gompachi's *komuso* disguise is described in the note on the print referred to above.

The subject, if not the identical print, is reproduced in the Tokyo volume of "Selected Actor Prints," No. 146.

THE GROLIER CLUB

Signed Shunshō. Date 1772.

Size $12 \times 5\frac{3}{4}$.

44 SHUNSHŌ

Black background. The actor Nakamura Nakazō as a Buddhist pilgrim. He carries the pilgrim's staff, and on his back is a portable shrine bearing an inscription which reads: "The most famous man of past or present in all the sixty-six provinces." The rôle probably is that of Sometarō Yoshikado.

Signed Shunshō. Date about 1780.

Size $12\frac{1}{4} \times 5\frac{7}{8}$. (Plate XIV).

45 SHUNSHŌ

Black background. The actor Ichikawa Danzō as a *samurai* holding a lantern whose flaring rays illuminate the dark sky. A *samurai* was a feudal retainer of the warrior class who was privileged to wear two swords.

Signed Shunshō. Date uncertain.

Size $12\frac{1}{8} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$.

46 SHUNSHŌ

"The Red Danjuro." The 5th Ichikawa Danjuro in a *shibaraku*, or "wait a moment," rôle. Between the acts, or at the close of a performance when the company was assembled on the stage the leading actor was accustomed to run down the "Flower Walk," described under Number 39,



PLATE XIV

SHUNSHŌ NO. 44

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

call out "Wait a moment" and perform a brief act of his own, to the particular delectation of those who had been fortunate enough to secure places in that part of the house. These interludes were played with a voluminous red dressing-gown thrown over the costume. In this print the *mon*, or crest, on the curtains behind the actor is that of the Nakamura Theatre. The large white *mon* of concentric squares, so prominent on the costume, is that of Danjuro himself. The blue background that so often decomposes to dull yellow (see note on Number 32) here is perfectly preserved.

Print reproduced, "Asia," October, 1923.

Subject reproduced, "Selected Actor Prints," No. 164; and in color, Succo's "Shunshō," Plate 33. Signed Shunshō. Date 1776.

Size $12\frac{3}{4}$ x $5\frac{3}{4}$.

47 SHUNSHŌ

"The Black Danjuro." The 5th Danjuro once more; but this time in voluminous black on which is a great white ideograph indicating Kintoki, that fabulous young Hercules who grew up with his wild mountain mother and performed such amazing feats of strength.

The make-up of the face with red lines was an hereditary privilege of the Danjuros or of the Ichikawa actor-family to which they belonged. The Danjuros were the greatest of all Japanese tragic actors, and the 4th, 5th, and 9th were the

THE GROLIER CLUB

greatest of the Danjuros. In fact, since the death of the 9th Danjuro, about twenty years ago, no actor has been found universally considered worthy to take the name and the various aspirants continue to sigh in vain. The 4th Danjuro gave the name to the 5th, who happened to be his son, in 1770. In this print the *mon* nowhere appears but the face is unmistakable. Both the 4th and 5th Danjuros had very long noses, but the face of the 5th was a little more full, a little less thin, than that of his great predecessor.

Print reproduced, "Selected Actor Prints," No. 170.

Signed Shunshō. Date 1781.

Size $12\frac{3}{4}$ x $5\frac{3}{4}$.

48 SHUNSHŌ

The actor Ichikawa Monnosuke II as Shosho, the Mistress of one of the Soga brothers whose story is referred to in the note on Number 13. He holds aloft a jar of incense. The costumes of the Soga play are apt to be easy to identify by the butterflies of one brother and the fat little *chidori* birds of the other; as in the print referred to above, where both are seen. Compare Number 17.

Subject reproduced, "Selected Actor Prints," No. 163.

Signed Shunshō. Date 1776.

Size 13 x 6.



PLATE XV

SHUNSHŌ NO. 49

49 SHUNSHŌ

The 4th Iwai Hanshirō as a woman in pink and white holding a round fan.

Subject reproduced, Fig. 9, Fogg Art Museum Notes, January, 1923.

Signed Shunshō. Date about 1780.

Size $11\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$. (Plate XV).

The dating of actor prints is one of the erudite subjects left undiscussed here; it may, however, be said briefly that the sources of knowledge are threefold:

(1) With the help of the chronicles of the Yedo stage and after long independent researches, Mr. Frederick W. Gookin, and Major J. J. O'Brien Sexton of London have succeeded in discovering the actual dates of many performances the actors in which are represented in prints.

(2) In 1919 there was published in Tokyo a volume of "Selected Actor Prints" giving reproductions of 300 prints which could be dated, at least approximately, either through the theatrical records preserved in the actors' families or by means of contemporary inscriptions.

(3) Shortly afterwards the Ukiyo-ye Magazine of the same city reproduced over fifty variations of Shunshō's signature and seals, arranged in approximately chronological order and taken from prints the dates of which were known.

THE GROLIER CLUB

With these three authorities it should be easy to date any print by Shunshō; but what is to be done when the authorities disagree?

50 SHUNSHŌ

The same actor as the last. A brilliant print in a perfect state of preservation.

Print reproduced, Blanchard Catalogue, No. 11 B.

Signed Shunshō. Date about 1774.

Size $12\frac{3}{4}$ x 6.

51 SHUNSHŌ

The actor Yamashita Kinsaku as a woman. Actors changed their names and, by consequence, their crests, with an even more bewildering frequency than did the painters who depicted them; but fortunately a rich provincial who came to Yedo at this time, so enjoyed the theatre there that he commissioned Shunshō and Bunchō to make portraits of the principal actors he had seen, and these he had published in a three-volume book, with the personal as well as the stage name of the actor printed outside the fan-shaped bounding lines of each picture. One can imagine what a supper he must have given the night before he started back to the country, and how he felt the next morning when the bearers were ready at dawn.

Signed Shunshō. Date about 1780.

Size $12\frac{3}{4}$ x $5\frac{5}{8}$.



PLATE XVI

SHUNKŌ NO. 54

52 SHUNSHŌ

The same actor, Yamashita Kinsaku, holding a lute and standing on a river bank against the black background of night.

Print reproduced, Frederick May Catalogue, No. 333.

Signed Shunshō. Date 1778.

Size $12\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{3}{8}$.

It is rather odd that although Shunshō is thought to be at his best in his earlier maturity, almost all the eleven prints selected, after careful comparison, for this exhibition should date from a later period.

SHUNKŌ (1743-1812)

Except for Hokusai, who early in his career broke away from the manner and traditions of his master, the most important of Shunshō's many pupils were Shunkō and Shunyei. About 1790 Shunkō was incapacitated by paralysis and the remaining twenty-two years of his life are a blank of which one does not like to think.

53 SHUNKŌ

The 5th Danjuro, other portraits of whom are shown as Numbers 46 and 47. Shunshō's print of this actor in the same performance is reproduced in the H. E. Field Catalogue, No. 278. In some cases the former pupil surpassed the master,

THE GROLIER CLUB

but Shunkō is apt to have less dramatic power, more suavity.

Signed Katsukawa Shunkō. Date about 1780.

Size $12\frac{1}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$.

54 SHUNKŌ

The actor Nakamura Tomijūrō as an old man. This is very different in line and feeling from any print by Shunkō's master, Shunshō, with which the compiler happens to be familiar, and shows how original the finest work of Shunkō was.

Signed Shunkō. Date about 1780.

Size $11\frac{7}{8} \times 5\frac{7}{8}$. (Plate XVI).

55 SHUNKŌ

Another portrait of the 4th Iwai Hanshirō (compare Numbers 49 and 50). Here he is dressed in black with purple *obi* and stands beneath a snow-laden willow. A rare subject that has not been reproduced hitherto, although it is one of the finest of Shunkō's designs.

Signed Shunkō.

Size $12 \times 5\frac{1}{2}$. (Plate XVII).

SHUNYEI (1768-1819)

Shunyei, an artist of marked originality, is ranked by many as almost the equal of Shunshō, with whom he certainly compares favorably in power of characterization and individuality of treatment, though he seldom, if ever, shows the



PLATE XVII

SHUNKŌ NO. 55

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

tragic intensity of his master. It would be difficult to make a mistake in the attribution of an unsigned Shunyei; the work of the other men when it lacks a signature, is harder to place with assurance. Shunyei is closer to Sharaku. No attempt has been made to date separately the four prints by Shunyei that have been chosen for exhibition; it is likely, however, that all were issued between 1789 and the close of the century.

56 SHUNYEI

A portrait of the 5th Danjuro (compare Numbers, 46, 47, 53) on one of the rare occasions when he appeared as a woman—and an angry one at that; the actors who specialized in men's or women's rôles very seldom attempting the other. The branch drooping into the top of the print is a device frequently employed by this artist.

Subject reproduced, Joly and Tomita Catalogue, Plate XXVII, No. 60.

Signed Shunyei and published by Tsuruya Kieimon.

Size $12\frac{1}{2}$ x $5\frac{5}{8}$.

57 SHUNYEI

Portrait of the actor Sawamura Sojurō in a pleasure boat.

Print reproduced, Haviland Catalogue, Part I, No. 174.

Signed Shunyei.

Size $12\frac{3}{4}$ x $5\frac{3}{4}$.

58 SHUNYEI

The same actor as the last. This time he is in simple white set off by an *obi* of purple and stands, without accessories, against a gray sky with white blossoms above.

Signed Shunyei and published by Tsuruya.

Size $12\frac{3}{4}$ x $5\frac{3}{4}$. (Plate XVIII).

59 SHUNYEI

This portrait of the 5th Danjuro may be compared with those by Shunshō and Shunkō which are exhibited as Numbers 46, 47, 53, 56, and that by Sharaku, Number 71. All are notable works, and this, with the next print by Shunyei to be exhibited, is counted among the finest things he did.

Danjuro stands, with drawn sword and swirling garments decorated with sea-weed, in water that swirls and breaks against the closed gate of a dam. His long hair, marvelously engraved and printed, has the rhythm of the draperies. His legs and arms are cased in mottled frog skin, for he is in the part of Tenjiku Tokubei—a traveler of the 17th Century whose exploits had become legendary, and who was supposed to have lived among frogs and to have been able to transform himself into a gigantic one by some special form of magic. Tokubei, who is reported to have started on his first journey to India and Siam in 1633, is said to have been a mighty highway-



PLATE XVIII

SHUNYEI NO. 58

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

man in his youth, but finally to have reformed and entered the priesthood, where it is likely that his parishioners—if he had any—took good care not to thwart him. In the print he is shown before his reformation.

Signed Shunyei.

Size 13 x 6. (Plate XIX).

60 SHUNYEI

The actor Ichikawa Komazō as a hunter in a straw rain-coat carrying a gun. He is in the rôle of the unfortunate Kanpei in Chushingura. (For the play see Number 39). Kanpei's hunting was not very successful, for his only kill that night was an unrecognized man, and when he got home in the morning to find that the body of his father-in-law had just been brought in, the deductions from circumstantial evidence gave him at least a *mauvais quart d'heure*.

Subject reproduced, No. 176, Shojiro Nomura Catalogue (Sale Anderson Galleries) March 16, 1915; and No. 82, Collection K. T., Hotel Drouot, February, 1910.

Size 13 x 5 $\frac{7}{8}$. (Plate XX).

61 SHUNYEI

Mica ground. Bust portrait of an unidentified round faced actor with no visible *mon*, or crest. He is leaning forward with outstretched right hand and is "made up" in red around his eyes and nose. The horizontal stripes of his kimono

THE GROLIER CLUB

are red and white on his right side and green and white on his left. He faces toward the left.

In some of Shunyei's large actor-portraits, his style and that of Sharaku have a certain resemblance. This fact has led a well-known crafty dealer in Tokyo to increase his profits by turning fine Shunyei prints into fraudulent Sharakus, by the simple device of erasing or trimming off the Shunyei signature, adding a mica ground, and printing in the name of the other and rarer master. It is a pity; for Shunyei is strong enough to stand on his own feet.

The present print has been thus altered. An unaltered example of it, with Shunyei's signature, is in the Vever Collection, Paris. Size $15\frac{1}{4} \times 10$. (Plate XXI).

SHARAKU

Date of birth uncertain, died 1804. He appears to have designed prints only in the years 1794 and 1795.

Much has been written about Sharaku, most notably—in spite of his poetic exaggeration—by Mr. Ficke in his "Chats on Japanese Prints," pp. 300–319; much could be written, and the temptation is great. For the present, however, it must suffice to make clear, if possible, the human background and let the art speak for itself. The popular theatre was scorned—as prints were scorned—by all save the middle and lower classes;



PLATE XIX

SHUNYEI NO. 59

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

the aristocrats, in the seclusion of their palaces, had the Nō dramas of exceedingly abstruse meaning and lofty moral tone that were danced and chanted before hushed audiences of scholars. Sharaku was a professional Nō dancer in the service of one of the great nobles, and he appears in his maturity to have come suddenly and for the first time into contact with the theatre of the people. It is as though some cloistered Fellow of Oxford, who had given his life to playing Æschylus and Sophocles there, should have witnessed a series of amateur nights in vaudeville. He saw the commonness of common men, their bestiality, their small conceit, their stupidity; he saw the animal characteristics in them so clearly that he would have been an excellent illustrator of Æsop or of Gulliver's Travels—the comparison with Swift is rather apt; and, in spite of rays of somewhat ironic humor that gleam occasionally from his portraits, he drew them in the main with savage scorn, with that blind bitterness which is the child of disillusion. He reveals the plebeian actors as Goya revealed the Spanish Bourbons—but there is this vast difference: Sharaku was able to let himself go, Goya was not. Portraits of popular idols drawn in this vein are not likely to prove popular; and after two years of the uninterrupted production of masterpieces Sharaku ceased to make prints. The rest is silence. There are rumors and conjectures as to his later years but nothing very definite is known; nor is it known

just how many prints he designed during those two years of bitter activity. Herr Kurth, who wrote a book on Sharaku, was able to record about seventy subjects and reproduce fifty-nine of them: after which the French collectors hung 105, all of which are reproduced as part of one of those exhibitions at the Musée des Arts Decoratifs, of which the V. I. Catalogues are the monumental record. Of the eleven selected for exhibition here, all are signed Toshusai Sharaku and were published by Tsutaya. The references to Kurth are to the edition of 1910, which most collectors have. The 1922 edition has the same illustrations re-numbered.

62 SHARAKU

Yellow ground. The actor Segawa Tomisaburō as a woman defending a child.

The subject is recorded by Kurth, No. 19 (O). The V. I. Catalogue does not contain it. It is reproduced, however, as No. 14, in the advertisement of Rex & Company at the end of Kurth's volume. Size 13 x 6.

63 SHARAKU

Yellow ground. Yamashina Tomijūrō as a *samurai* holding a painted fan.

Subject reproduced, Kurth, Plate 31. Not in V. I. Catalogue.

Size $12\frac{3}{4}$ x 6.



PLATE XX

SHUNYEI NO. 60

64 SHARAKU

Yellow ground. Ichikawa Yazoō as a *samurai* in a black robe decorated with the so-called "thunder pattern."

Subject reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. III, No. 315.

Size $12\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{7}{8}$.

65 SHARAKU

Mica ground. The same actor as the last in the rôle of Kanpei in "Chushingura." The play is referred to in the note on No. 39 and the rôle under No. 60.

Print reproduced, H. E. Field Catalogue, No. 577. Subject reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. III, No. 277, and Kurth, Plate 42.

Size $15\frac{1}{8} \times 10$.

66 SHARAKU

Mica ground. Matsumoto Koshirō, with a pipe in his hand, in the rôle of a "chivalrous defender of the down-trodden." (Otokodate). Is this satire or burlesque?

Subject reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. III, No. 270, and Kurth, Plate 44.

Size $15 \times 10\frac{1}{8}$.

67 SHARAKU

Mica ground. Arashi Ryūzō. The rôle is said, without definite authority, to be that of Yoichi-bei, a peasant, in "Chushingura."

THE GROLIER CLUB

Print reproduced, Rouart Catalogue, No. 308.
Subject reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. III,
No. 271, and Kurth, Plate 35.
Size $14\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$.

68 SHARAKU

Mica ground. Iwai Hanshirō as Oishi, wife of Yuranosuke, hero of "Chushingura." For other portraits of this actor see Numbers 49, 50, 55. The play is referred to under Numbers 39, 60, and elsewhere. Yuranosuke is really the hero of the piece, for the action concerns itself chiefly with the efforts of forty-seven loyal retainers, seconded by their wives, to avenge the death of their lord on the villain, Moronao; and Yuranosuke, besides being the chief retainer, is the brain of the devoted band. The graves of these forty-seven men are visited annually by thousands, for they really lived, and in their deaths as in their lives left to posterity an example of that unswerving, utterly self-sacrificing loyalty which of all virtues is that most honored by the Japanese. Subject reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. III, No. 269, and Kurth, Plate 51.
Size $14\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{7}{8}$.

69 SHARAKU

Mica ground. Kosagawa Tsuenyō as the wife of one of the *Ronin* in "Chushingura" (see notes on Numbers 39, 68, etc., for this play). A *ronin* is a masterless *samurai* or fighting man. The re-



PLATE XXI

SHUNYEI NO. 61

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

tainers in this play became *ronin* through the death of their lord and the confiscation of his property.

Subject reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. III, No. 282, and Kurth, Plate 52.

Size 15 x 10½.

70 SHARAKU

Mica ground. Ichikawa Komazō.

Print reproduced, Jacquin Catalogue, No. 35, where the inscription on the print is read and the question of the rôle discussed.

Subject reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. III, No. 274, and Kurth, Plate 39.

Size 14³/₈ x 9⁷/₈.

71 SHARAKU

Mica ground. In this subject, which is considered by many the finest work by Sharaku and the most powerful of Japanese prints, the 5th Danjuro is again depicted (compare Numbers 46, 47, 53, 56, and 59), this time, probably, as Moronao, the crafty, cowardly and lecherous villain of the play described in the note on Number 39, and elsewhere.

An inscription on the face of the print gives the date of the performance, October, 1794. The question of the rôle, with particular reference to the written inscription on this impression of the print, was considered at length under Number 30 of the Jacquin Catalogue, with the conclusion that the

THE GROLIER CLUB

actor was, as has always been supposed, playing Moronao. Mr. Gookin seems sufficiently to have overwhelmed with his arguments a Japanese cataloguer of 1918, who considered the rôle that of Kudo Suketsune; but the Japanese, as a race, are hard to down and another critic of that country has replied to the Retort Courteous with a Quip Modest: Moronao never wears *kamashimo*; therefore the character cannot be Moronao but might be the Daimyo Matsumoto Hosokawa. The present writer is sure of but one thing: whether the character be that of the villain Moronao or some other, there can be no possible doubt of his villainy. It takes but little scholarship to see that.

Subject reproduced, V. I. Catalogue. Vol. III, No. 264 and Kurth, Plate 38.

Size $14\frac{1}{2}$ x 10.

KORIUSAI (worked Ca. 1768-1786)

Koriusai's finest work, except for a few very distinguished "pillar" prints, is in his birds and flowers. Occasionally, as in the print now exhibited, he did a really fine thing in the ordinary 15 x 10 inch form, but most of the work of his maturity is rather coarse and garish. His early prints are strongly under the influence of Harunobu, and most of them are of the small size made popular by that master, but much less used in the period upon which we are now about to enter.



JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

He is important enough to deserve a place in any exhibition, but in the limited space available it seemed best to show only one carefully chosen example of his figure prints.

72 KORIUSAI

The Courtesan Nishikigi followed by her attendants. From a series of fashion plates for the *demi-monde*.

Signed by Koriusai and published by Eijudo. Seal Koshodō. This seal is that of another publisher, Tsutaya Jusaburō. In this set it only appears on the earliest impressions of certain prints. Its presence and meaning are discussed under Number 20 of the privately printed catalogue of prints in the collection of Major O'Brien Sexton. Date about 1776.

Size $15\frac{7}{8}$ x $10\frac{1}{8}$. (Plate XXII).

SHIGEMASA (1739-1820)

Kitao Shigemasa, a pupil of the "Primitive" Shigenaga, was an accomplished artist of thirty-one when Harunobu died; but he survived until within five years of the death of Toyokuni, the final great artist of the figure prints; and when he himself looked for the last time on the world he had depicted, Hokusai had been drawing that world for more than twenty years and Hiroshige was finishing his student work. Shigemasa's early prints were done in the three-color period;

later he was influenced strongly by Harunobu and other masters of polychrome, and worked in many styles, bringing, however, to each his own peculiar distinction of treatment. Early prints by Shigemasa are signed, but toward the middle of his career he is said to have remarked that, as no one else could draw as well as he, there was no necessity of affixing his signature. The work of his maturity is as rare as it is fine, either because he did little of it, or because his prints were published in unusually small editions.

73 SHIGEMASA

A geisha going to a party followed by her maid who carries a *samisen* (Japanese banjo) in a box. This style of Shigemasa's is peculiarly characteristic. It has a plastic quality of modeling, particularly in some of the folds of the drapery that suggests sculpture in wood or clay.

Subject reproduced, British Museum Catalogue (Binyon) p. 78; and in color, Binyon and Sexton, Plate VII, from an impression with one less color block than the one exhibited.

Probable date about 1780.

Size $15\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{1}{2}$.

74 SHIGEMASA

Two young women in thin summer kimono; one is seated beside a lantern on a bamboo bench, the other stands holding a fan.



PLATE XXIII

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

A lovely print by Shigemasa in a style that is difficult to distinguish from that of the finest work of his pupil, Kitao Masanobu, who, however was accustomed to sign his prints.

Date about 1790.

Size $14\frac{5}{8}$ x $9\frac{3}{4}$. (Plate XXIII).

KIYONAGA (1752-1814)

Kiyonaga is considered by many the greatest of the artists who designed the Japanese figure prints. In power of composition, power of line, he is superb, and his people are stately, large-limbed, nobly-proportioned, gracious. Compare any print by him with a print by Harunobu and notice the gain and loss. It is a grown-up world that is depicted here, more real, perhaps, than the other, less charming and more impressive. Of the impressiveness of Kiyonaga at his best there can be no question; he was a master of his art; but the present writer is heretical enough to believe that sometimes his figures are too statuesque—too much like manikins, too little like creatures of flesh and blood. One may admire Kiyonaga more than Harunobu but is certain to love him less. All of the prints by this artist that have been selected for exhibition are signed by him, and all that have publishers' marks were published by Eijudo. They were issued—in all probability—between 1780 and 1790; but there is no way of dating them as accurately as actor prints, when

THE GROLIER CLUB

the records of particular performances have survived. Kiyonaga also did an important series of scenes from the theatre—large sheets, frequently with six figures each.

75 KIYONAGA

The actor Ichikawa Yaozō in his bedroom. He is listening to the words of a companion who has not been identified with certainty, but may have been his wife. Is it the duty of this cataloguer to find out? Mr. Gookin, who has a *penchant* for actors, once thought that the second figure was a player of women's rôles, come to see Yaozō without taking off his stage clothes. M. Vignier assumes the worst.

The print is from a series, as fine as it is rare, of actors off the stage.

Subject reproduced on page 94 in the Catalogue of the Memorial Exhibition of Japanese Prints from the Collection of Clarence Buckingham (Chicago 1915), and Haviland Catalogue of June, 1923, No. 191.

Size $11\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{7}{8}$.

76 KIYONAGA

The Iris Garden. This is the right-hand sheet of a diptych afterwards re-engraved. The left-hand sheet is in the New York Public Library and elsewhere; but the composition would suggest a possible triptych of which the sheet on the extreme right has not been seen.



PLATE XXIV

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

Print reproduced, Jacquin Catalogue, No. 62.
An impression of the second state, with the design re-drawn, is reproduced in color as Plate 12 of Fenollosa's "An Outline of the History of Ukiyo-ye."
Size $14\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$.

77 KIYONAGA

The left-hand sheet of a diptych. A tall woman in black and rose standing beside a barred window, through which a snow landscape is seen. In the foreground are a man about to write and a child fanning a brazier. Another child behind. Both sheets of this diptych are in the New York Public Library.
Size $15\frac{1}{8} \times 10$. (Plate XXIV).

78 KIYONAGA

The Serenade. This is the left-hand, and by far the finest, sheet of a triptych representing a scene from one of the mediæval romances that are to the Japanese what the "Morte d'Arthur" is, or might be, to us. In Japan everyone recognizes an episode from these stories as quickly as the ancient Greeks would have recognized an episode out of Homer; they are the common property of all. A comparison between the Japanese romances and let us say, the "Morte d'Arthur" or "Amadis of Gaul" is interesting. There is just as much fighting in the one as in the other, the heroes perform deeds of equally amazing prowess;

THE GROLIER CLUB

but in the Japanese stories the women are more heroic, more capable; they are not, as the adoration of the Virgin Mary made them with us, white and aloof, to be protected and died for. In Japan, as in Greece, the bonds of chivalry were between men; and the women take, when necessity arises, a very active part in affairs, are helpmates in the fullest meaning of the word. In those eras of Japanese history when the influence of China was not dominant, the position of women, especially in the court circles, was exalted, and their education was quite equal to that of the men. The first and greatest of Japanese novelists, for example, was a woman, and one of the most moving episodes in all romance is the dance of Shizuka before Yoritomo—the beautiful young girl, captive and broken-hearted, before the cruel brother of the man she loved.

In the print exhibited, Yoritomo's young brother, Prince Yoshitsune, the most popular among the noble heroes of Japan, is seen in an earlier part of his career, playing a serenade outside a palace, the mistress of which has sent her maid to identify the musician. It was an evening of "perilous moonlight," and the end of the story that is scarcely more than an episode in the life of Yoshitsune, was, for the beautiful young inmate of the palace, death.

This print, the garden background of which is in green as it should be, not yellow, is reproduced as

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

No. 291 in the Catalogue of the Shotaro Sato Sale, New York, 1916. Impressions of the whole triptych in the first state are reproduced in the Hayashi Catalogue, p. 216, and elsewhere. A reissue of the print was made from recut blocks with the moon left out, and other changes, and this second state of the sheet exhibited may best be compared with the first in the reproduction of the V. I. Catalogue, Vol. III, No. 109.

Size $15\frac{3}{8}$ x $10\frac{1}{8}$.

79 KIYONAGA

Two ladies out for a walk accompanied by a maid servant and a young *samurai*. It is pleasant to find that some of Kiyonaga's statuesque beauties are of what might be called good society. Ladies dressed, of course, in a much less ostentatious manner than the courtesans; the *obi* are not tied in front and the showy hair pins are not worn. From a series, perhaps of fashion plates, called: "Brocades of the Eastern Capital." The Eastern Capital was Yedo, now Tokyo, as distinguished from Kyoto. The Shoguns who had usurped the power—like the Mayors of the Palace of early France—kept their state in Yedo; the Emperors had their quieter court at Kyoto. Print reproduced in color: Arthur Morrison, Catalogue of Exhibition of The Fine Art Society, London, 1910, No. 104, and Huish, "Japan and its Art," (Third edition), Plate II.

Size $15\frac{1}{4}$ x $10\frac{3}{8}$.

80 KIYONAGA

The courtesan Wakakusa of Chojiya followed by her attendants.

A marvel of printing, perfectly preserved. This is a sheet from a set illustrating spring fashions of the *demi-monde*, in which Kiyonaga and Kori-usai appear to have collaborated. See No. 72. Subject reproduced, No. 205, Sotheby Catalogue of May 31, 1921: The First Portion of the Collection of T. Thacher Clarke.

Size 15 x 10 $\frac{1}{8}$.

81 KIYONAGA

A young man with two geisha; the one at the left stands holding a round fan, the one at the right is seated with a *samisen*, or Japanese banjo, across her lap.

Notice the perfect placing of the black pouch in the foreground, without which the print would lose half its beauty. It is from a Series showing the "Real Beauties of the Gay Quarters."

Subject reproduced, Van Caneghem Catalogue, No. 63, and Sotheby Catalogue of November 27, 1913: The Collection of an American Artist Residing in Europe, No. 78.

Size 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$.

82 KIYONAGA

The actor Matsumoto Koshiro having tea with two geisha.



JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

Print reproduced, No. 452 B, Matsuki Sale,
American Art Galleries, February, 1908.

Size $15\frac{1}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{8}$. (Plate XXV).

83 KIYONAGA

The Salt Gatherers. Two peasant girls at the edge of the sea, carrying the buckets in which they gather salt-water. Again in this print there is a reference to an old romance, for the two girls represent Matsukaze and Murasame, who passed into legend and became the subject of a Nō drama because of their relations with a noble who had been banished from court to exile on the sea coast of Suma. Once more, as in the subject of Number 78, the episode was but an episode for the lover, but, for the girl, the beginning and end of happiness, the warrant of immortality. Kiyonaga has done the same scene again in a pillar print. This print is from the same Series as Number 79. The subject has been reproduced in many places, among which it is best to choose the reproduction in color of the V. I. Catalogue, Vol. III, No. 63, in spite of the fact that this was made from an impression that had been trimmed, and had faded to a lovely harmony of quiet tones, whereas the one exhibited is in the original condition.

Size $15\frac{1}{8} \times 10\frac{1}{8}$.

84 KIYONAGA

A court lady of the long ago beside a stream. Kiyonaga did a number of prints of this type

THE GROLIER CLUB

representing the old court costumes with their beautifully flowing lines. Most of these have two figures each; the one exhibited with its stately single figure is the finest that the compiler has seen.

Print reproduced as frontispiece to Catalogue of "A Small Private Collection," Walpole Galleries, New York, June 14, 1920.

Subject reproduced, Ficke Catalogue, No. 209.

Size 15 x 10.

85 KIYONAGA

Diptych. A group of people visiting a Shinto shrine in winter.

The figure of the man in black is particularly fine, the dark robes being set off against the snow. The left-hand sheet is reproduced in color in the Catalogue of the Exhibition held by the Japan Society of New York, 1911, No. 131; the right-hand sheet is reproduced in the Van Caneghem Catalogue, No. 45.

Size $15\frac{1}{8}$ x 20.

86 KIYONAGA

Triptych. Women landing from a pleasure boat. The limited amount of space available permitted the exhibition of but two triptychs. This one, however, could not be omitted. It is a famous impression of a famous print.

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

Subject reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. III,
No. 119.

Size 15 x 30.

SHUNCHŌ (worked Ca. 1780-1795)

Shunchō's work was contemporary with the best of Kiyonaga's. It is somewhat less masculine, less statuesque than that of his great rival; the figures are apt to have a softer, more gently feminine grace. Kiyonaga was the greater of the two, but Shunchō has a quality all his own, that gives him high place among the artists who worked in the closing decades of the 18th century.

87 SHUNCHŌ

Triptych. A group of women of pleasure, whose names and addresses are given, in an iris garden. A lovely color scheme of quiet tones that became the vogue about 1790 and was much used by Shunchō, Shunman and Yeishi.

It is said that in Japan demons cannot change easily the direction in which they are going, a fact that makes bridges of the kind shown in the print exceedingly useful; for if the devil is after you and you turn the corner abruptly he is likely to fall off into the water and be drowned.

This triptych, unmounted at the time, was in the Yoshiwara fire in which so many fine prints were destroyed.

Subject reproduced, Sotheby Catalogue of April 17, 1918: (A Parisian Collector), No. 72.

THE GROLIER CLUB

Signed by Shunchō and published by Izumiya.
Size 15 x 30.

88 SHUNCHŌ

A youth walking with a woman in black and two attendants.

Print reproduced, Blanchard Catalogue, No. 27.
Signed by Shunchō and published by Eijudo.
Size $15\frac{1}{8}$ x 10.

89 SHUNCHŌ

Mica ground. Bust portrait of a young girl named Hisa holding a round, red fan. From a series of beautiful women compared to flowers. The iris is shown in a circle above. An exquisite piece of color and design; one of the loveliest prints in the exhibition.

An impression, without signature or publisher's seal or silver ground, is reproduced as an Utamaro in the Sotheby Catalogue of June 23, 1913, No. 335.

Signed by Shunchō and published by Tsuruya.
Size 15 x $9\frac{7}{8}$.

SHUNMAN (1757-1820)

The work of Shunman is rather rare and is noted for its delicacy of treatment and color.

90 SHUNMAN

Two adjoining sheets, mounted as a diptych, of Shunman's best known composition—a six-sheet

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

set illustrating the six rivers named Tama of Japan. These six rivers of the same name are frequently illustrated or allegorized. Many poems were written about them, one being noted for the beauty of the flowers that grew on its banks, another for the sweetness of its water, and so forth.

The subjects are reproduced with the sheet that comes next on the left in Succo's "Toyokuni," Vol. I, Plate 13. The one still farther to the left is shown in the V. I. Catalogue, Vol. V, No. 127. Signed by Shunman and published by Fushi-Zen about 1790.

Size, right-hand sheet, $14\frac{5}{8} \times 9\frac{5}{8}$.

Size, left-hand sheet, $15 \times 9\frac{5}{8}$.

UTAMARO (1753-1806)

With Harunobu, Sharaku, Kiyonaga, and ranked by the French, who in such matters are good judges, as at least their equal stands Utamaro—the fourth great artist of the "Brocade Pictures"; the lover of women, the painter, of the *Fleurs du Mal*. Unquestionably a great artist, he gave his art, he gave his life to the "Flowers of Yedo," as the courtesans in their gorgeous robes had come to be called; and as his power worked toward its premature decline he drew them with ever increasing exaggeration of figure and of pose, more and more like blooms of the jungle and morass, never such blossoms as filled the spring-

time orchards of Harunobu or climb the wind-swept hillsides of Japan. Utamaro's earlier work is in the manner of Kiyonaga and Shunchō, with figures of large proportions; the finest of his prints are of the middle period; toward the close of his career the exaggeration and the mannerisms become too pronounced. He was perhaps a great *decadent*; but on thinking of the *decadence* one must not forget the greatness. Few prints, if any, are more lovely than the silver ground half-figures of Utamaro's middle years.

91 UTAMARO

Two geisha preparing for a fancy-dress procession. A maid is helping one on with her outer robe while the other is applying rouge (*beni*) to her face before a mirror. From the so-called "Niwaka" series which was published before 1780. This is a fine impression of a famous subject and has the color perfectly preserved. It is exhibited, not so much to illustrate the very early, imitative manner of Utamaro, as to show the final technical perfection attained in the art of color-printing from wood-blocks. Utamaro was very fond of technical difficulties, *tours de force* of engraving and printing. In the printing of this sheet a large number of color-blocks were used and the perfection of the engraving as well as that of the printing is extraordinary. Notice the translucent scarf thrown over the painted screen, the edge of the material against the white

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

neck of the standing geisha and the reflected hair of the other one. The print is too crowded to be one of Utamaro's artistic triumphs, but the unknown cutter of the blocks and the printer deserve to have their work remembered.

Subject reproduced, from a trimmed, soiled and dull-colored copy, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. IV, No. 18. The impression exhibited was No. 220 in the Appleton Sale at Sotheby's in 1910.

Signed Utamaro:

Size $15\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{1}{2}$.

92 UTAMARO

Bust portrait of Komurasaki of Tama-ya. Compare this print with Number 91 and note the elongation of the face—an indication that it was made toward the close of Utamaro's career, though probably before 1800.

Subject reproduced, Haviland Catalogue, Part I, No. 311.

Signed by Utamaro and published by Yamaguchi.

Size $15\frac{1}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{4}$.

93 UTAMARO

Blowing the Fire. The right hand and finer sheet of the "Kitchen" diptych. First state. The print was reissued later with a number of important changes, perhaps necessitated by the afterthought of a second sheet to go with it in a diptych.

THE GROLIER CLUB

Subject reproduced in the later form, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. IV, No. 90, and Hayashi Catalogue, p. 188. The first state, with the publisher's mark on the right hand, or only sheet, does not appear to have been reproduced.

Signed Utamaro and published by Uyemura.

Size 15 x 10.

It is difficult to date accurately prints by Utamaro but this one and those that follow may be classed roughly as of the middle period.

94 UTAMARO

A geisha and her maid in a storm, carrying an umbrella, the box containing her *samisen*, and lantern, the rays of which light the scene.

Print reproduced, Kinbei Murata Catalogue of October, 1913, No. 164.

Subject reproduced, Catalogue of Exhibition held by Fine Art Society of London, 1910, No. 128.

Signed by Utamaro and published by Moriji.

Size 15 x 9 $\frac{5}{8}$.

95 UTAMARO

Half-length figures of two women, each of whom holds a round fan.

A proof without letters; for in other printings of this subject, as in the one reproduced by Mr. Ficke—"Chats on Japanese Prints," Plate 39—the upper right hand corner contains a small landscape and a cartouche which gives a series

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

title—"Beautiful Women Compared with the 53 Stations of the Tokaido Road." An explanation of this comparison could be given, but it would be tedious to read and tedious to write, for the Japanese inherited or adopted from their Chinese neighbors the habit of harping on certain subjects, the result being far-fetched comparisons, tedious to us.

This print must have been drawn shortly before the middle period of Utamaro's work had ended; it is reproduced in "Asia" for September, 1923. Signed Utamaro.

Size $15\frac{3}{8} \times 10\frac{1}{8}$.

96 UTAMARO

Consolation. A young woman being comforted by her maid. This is the left-hand sheet of a diptych. A particularly beautiful piece of color and printing.

Subject reproduced, Haviland Catalogue, Part I, No. 307.

Signed Utamaro. Date about 1790.

Size 15×10 .

97 UTAMARO

An Elopement. Frequently miscalled "A Night Excursion." This is one of Utamaro's finest designs. It represents the elopement of Jihei, merchant, with the geisha Koharu, a story the details of which became famous through a play by Chikamatsu, originally written for mario-

THE GROLIER CLUB

nettes. The elopement ended sadly, as such elopements were wont to end, in double suicide; for the lovers were faithful, each to the other, and preferred death to separation.

Subject reproduced in color, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. IV, No. 140; where the series title is read: Mutual faith the source of love.

Signed Utamaro.

Size $15\frac{1}{8} \times 9\frac{5}{8}$.

98 UTAMARO

Yellow ground. A seated girl looking down at her beautiful white robe which is printed without the key-block black outline, the folds being indicated by gauffrage. Her face is outlined in pink. Another proof without letters; the usual impressions bear in the upper left-hand corner a self glorifying advertisement of Utamaro and all his works.

Print reproduced, Catalogue of Schraubstadter Collection, No. 788. The usual state is reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. IV, No. 94 and Kurth, "Utamaro," Plate 31.

The print is signed but bears no publisher's mark. Size $15 \times 9\frac{3}{4}$.

99 UTAMARO

Mica ground. Bust portrait of three famous beauties of the day. The title has been written in, perhaps by some contemporary. This may be another proof before letters.

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

The V. I. Catalogue, Vol. IV, No. 72, reproduces a print like the one exhibited, except for the cartouche in the corner and the names of the girls, which must have been put in later and are lacking here.

Signed by Utamaro and published by Tsutaya.
Size $15\frac{1}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{4}$.

100 UTAMARO

Mica ground. Half-length portrait of a young woman of good society holding an open fan and open umbrella, under which in cartouches are the title of the series: "Ten young women judged by a study of their faces," and the curious signature "Utamaro the Physiognomist, after mature consideration."

The print is in as perfect condition as though it had just come from the printer.

Print reproduced, Kinbei Murata Catalogue of September, 1917; and "Album of Old Prints reproduced from the Collection of Ken-ichi Kawaura," No. 186.

Subject reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. IV, No. 32

Publisher Tsutaya.

Size $15 \times 10\frac{1}{8}$.

101 UTAMARO

Mica ground. Half-length portrait of the courtesan Hanaogi, whose address is given, holding a writing brush in one hand and a sheet of paper

THE GROLIER CLUB

in the other. Above, in a second cartouche, is an erotic poem.

The *obi*, or sash, is printed in dull yellow, not in the green of some copies.

Print reproduced, Kinbei Murata Catalogue of October, 1913, No. 123.

Subject reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. IV, No. 62.

Signed by Utamaro and published by Tsutaya.

Size $14\frac{7}{8}$ x $9\frac{7}{8}$.

102 UTAMARO

Mica ground. The beautiful waitress, Okita, of the Naniwa tea-house, carrying a bowl of tea on a black lacquer stand. The poem above is signed Katsura Bijū, and has a heading—"Written while resting in Naniwa-ya." The text is a charming compliment to the lovely Okita, but the Japanese are as fond of unseasonable puns as the Dying Duke in "Richard II," and the number of them in this brief lyric would necessitate a commentary to explain a translation.

Subject reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. IV, No. 67.

Signed by Utamaro and published by Tsutaya.

Size $14\frac{1}{8}$ x $9\frac{7}{8}$.

CHOKI (worked Ca. 1789-1800)

Very little is known of this artist who appears to have worked only for a few brief years, but has

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

left prints of surpassing grace—as beautiful as they are rare. Choki's color schemes are particularly distinctive; and his finest prints, such as the two-figure one exhibited, are filled with romance.

103 CHOKI

Mica ground. Half-length portrait of Tsukasa Dayu, a lady of pleasure of Osaka.

Print reproduced, Haviland Catalogue, Part I, No. 336.

Signed by Choki and published by Tsutaya.

Size $14\frac{5}{8}$ x 10.

104 CHOKI

Mica ground. Two young women in moonlight beside a stream. One is lighting her pipe. Print described, Haviland Catalogue, Part I, No. 337.

Subject reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. V, No. 112.

Signed by Choki and published by Tsutaya.

Size 15 x 10.

YEISHI (1756–1829)

Yeishi, who was one of the few print designers of *samurai* rank, gave up making prints about 1799 and devoted the remaining thirty years of his life to the more respected occupation of painting. He was fond of portraying the ladies of the upper classes and his long, slim figures, though

THE GROLIER CLUB

drawn with some exaggeration and mannerism, are distinctive in their aristocratic grace; an effect which is helped by the quiet refinement of his favorite color scheme—black, gray, green, purple, yellow, in which the predominant blacks and grays are set off by the touches of brighter color. His earliest prints date from about 1788, so that the period of his production covers only eleven years. There is a delicacy of willowy loveliness about his work that makes the finest of his prints peculiarly prized.

105 YEISHI

The popular beauty Karakoto of Choji-ya walking with her attendants under wistaria blossoms. This is a sheet from a triptych.

Signed by Yeishi and published by Izumiya.

Size $15\frac{1}{8}$ x $10\frac{1}{8}$.

106 YEISHI

A lady, her maid and a child on a balcony with yellow railings. Above them the lattice screen is rolled up. At their feet is an empty bird cage and all are looking out of the picture to the right as though the bird had just been released. Behind is a brook in which ducks are swimming and, back of that, other buildings of a palace or temple enclosure. Probably the left hand sheet of a lost triptych.

Signed Yeishi.

Size 15 x 10.

107 YEISHI

An episode in the life of Komachi. Snow Scene. Komachi, a famous ninth century poetess of great talent and unusual beauty, passed her youth in luxury and splendor, gratifying each extravagant fancy. "But age, apace, comes at last to all," and to her it came more quickly than to most, bringing with it poverty, squalor and hunger. The strange reversal of Komachi's fortune from such heights of splendor to such depths of want, made her life a favorite subject for the artist and the moralist. Seven episodes in her career usually are depicted in a sort of analogue, no attempt being made to portray the costumes of the by-gone age, but the story being applied to some scornful contemporary beauty. Yeishi's Komachi Series is the best known and probably the finest of the printed ones, and two sheets of it are shown here. Print reproduced, Haviland Catalogue, Part I, No. 318.

Signed Yeishi and published by Izumiya.

Size 15 x 10.

108 YEISHI

The fifth episode in Komachi's Life. "Praying for Rain." From the same series as the preceding number, and with the same signature and publisher's mark. This must be a very early impression from the blocks and is a par-

THE GROLIER CLUB

ticularly fine piece of engraving and printing.
Subject reproduced, Haviland Catalogue, Part
I, No. 319.

Size $15\frac{1}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{4}$.

109 YEISHI

An episode from that chapter of the *Genji Monogatari*, or "Tales of Genji," which deals with the adventures of the amorous Prince during his exile at Suma.

Yeishi designed a number of fine triptychs depicting the famous Prince Genji, of whom more anon.

The print exhibited is the left hand sheet from one of these triptychs, and is one of Yeishi's best known and loveliest designs—the figure of the young lady in black having that inimitable refinement and charm which are characteristics of his finest work.

Prince Genji is the hero of the first and best of Japanese novels, a book that was written about the year 1000 by Murasaki Shikibu, a court-lady whose diary has recently been published in English and shows, as does her novel, the extraordinary degree of culture, refinement and æsthetic appreciation which had been attained by the Japanese at that early date. The Prince himself, a natural son of the Emperor, and a gentleman as talented as he was charming, won the hearts of most men and—with the notable exception of his step-mother—of all women;

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

but notwithstanding his own impressionable nature he was difficult to win. There was, for example, one young lady for whose education and talents he had the highest admiration but for whom his friendship could not ripen into love because her nose turned red whenever the weather grew chilly. The "elegant" Genji was a very fastidious person, in spite of his propensity for "Bunberrying." An excellent English translation of the first seventeen chapters of the novel was published in 1882 and gives a fascinating picture of the old court life with its rigid decorum and over-developed æstheticism.

The subject of the print exhibited has been reproduced several times; the best of these reproductions being that of the Appleton Catalogue (London 1910) Plate 23, though another, more easily accessible, is in Ficke's "Chats on Japanese Prints," Plate 37. Mr. Ficke's impression is entirely in black and gray without the purple of the one exhibited.

Signed Yeishi.

Size $15\frac{1}{4}$ x $10\frac{1}{4}$.

110 YEISHI

The Geisha Itsutomi standing; her *samisen* is at her feet, the plectrum in her hand. From a series of portraits of Geisha. This tall slender figure shows the mannerism into which Yeishi's style developed, but is an exquisite thing that could not have been done by anyone but Yeishi.

THE GROLIER CLUB

The print looks as though it might once have had a silver background, though neither of the other impressions known to the writer—that reproduced in the Catalogue of prints belonging to the Louvre, Vol. II, Plate 10, where it is credited by mistake to Yeisho, and that reproduced in the V. I. Catalogue, Vol. V, No. 25—shows any more trace of silver than does the print exhibited.

Signed by the artist and published by Iwatoya.

Size $14\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{3}{4}$.

III YEISHI

Silver ground. The courtesan Takigawa of Ogiya. From a Series of "Beauties of the Gay Quarters" (Yoshiwara). The silver ground prints of this series are the finest as well as the rarest of all Yeishis; perhaps there is nothing more lovely in the whole range of the art.

Subject reproduced in color, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. V, No. 26. A comparison will show that the print exhibited here is in much better condition, the delicate design in the white part of the kimono having faded from the Paris impression. Another impression, also reproduced in color, Binyon and Sexton, Plate XIII, is exceedingly fine.

Signed Yeishi Giga (designed for fun), and published by Iwatoya.

Size $14\frac{7}{8} \times 10$.

YEISHIN

Nothing has been ascertained regarding Yeishin who is assumed to have been a pupil of Yeishi. His few known works are excessively rare.

112 YEISHIN

Silver ground. Half-length portrait of a young noble with a falcon on his wrist. His outer kimono is decorated with a design of eggplants and where his family *mon*, or crest, should be is Fuji in white reserve, thus uniting the three fortunate omens of Japanese superstition—the eggplant, the sacred mountain and the falcon. It is worthy of notice that while there are three reproductions of this subject, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. V, No. 62; Hayashi Catalogue, p. 228, where the numbers and names are transposed through a printer's error, and Sotheby Sale of June 5, 1914, No. 63; all of these lack the silver ground, though that of the print exhibited certainly is old. The slight pink flush about the temple was part of the original printing but was printed very lightly and has almost faded out with time.

Signed Choyensai Yeishin.

Date about 1790.

Size 15 x 10.

THE GROLIER CLUB

GOKIO (worked Ca. 1790-1800)

Not much more is known of Gokio than of Yeishin, except that his work is not quite as rare and that he signed a number of prints "Yeishi's pupil Gokio." He is thought to have died very young.

113 GOKIO

The courtesan Makinoya of Matsukaneya, with her attendants, passing in front of one of the Yoshiwara houses with its green blinds. The color scheme of predominant gray with black, green, lavender and yellow is characteristic of Yeishi; but the print, though unsigned, is attributed with some confidence to Gokio whose signed work it resembles even more than it does that of his teacher.

Subject reproduced, Basil Stewart, "Subjects Portrayed in Japanese Color Prints," Plate 2, No. 2.

Date about 1790, probably just after Gokio ceased to sign as a pupil; or it may be part of a triptych one sheet of which was signed.

Size $15\frac{1}{4}$ x $10\frac{1}{2}$.

HOSODA YEIRI (worked Ca. 1790-1800)

Little or nothing is known about Yeiri. His prints are as rare as those of Yeishin, with whom and with Gokio it is probable that he

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

studied under Yeishi; but in any case he is not to be confounded with Rekisentei Yeiri, or the so-called Yeiri 2nd, both of whom were artists of far less power than he. The fame of our Yeiri rests chiefly on the two or three astonishing portraits by him that have survived: one of these is exhibited.

114 HOSODA YEIRI

Mica ground over black. Portrait of the novelist Santo Kyōden, who in his earlier years was the painter and print designer Kitao Masanobu (see note on Number 74), and who in his youth made the pictures for a volume that is considered one of the handsomest illustrated books of any nation. The poem on the fan is signed Santo Kyōden.

From a series depicting the celebrities of the various districts of Yedo.

Print reproduced, "Asia," October, 1923.

Subject reproduced, Haviland Catalogue of June, 1923, No. 341. Another of the set, and perhaps the only other that has survived, is reproduced in color, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. V, No. 59.

Signed Yeiri. Probable date about 1794.

Size $15\frac{3}{8}$ x $10\frac{1}{4}$.

KUNIMASA (1773-1810)

Kunimasa appears to have designed prints only for about eight years (1795-1803). He is noted for his large heads of actors and was a pupil of

THE GROLIER CLUB

Toyokuni, the last great artist of the figure prints, whose work will close the present exhibition.

115 KUNIMASA

The Laughing Girl. Bust portrait of the actor Matsumoto Yonesaburō, as a woman.

Subject reproduced, "Selected Actor Prints," No. 263.

Signed Kunimasa and published by Uyemura about 1796.

Size $14\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{3}{4}$.

TORIN

The little that is known or surmised of Torin, as a designer of prints, may be stated briefly. He represented the third generation of a family of painters called Tsutsumi, who were followers of the school of Korin, and was considerably more distinguished than his predecessors. He is known chiefly as a painter of pictures for temples and is said to have taught Hokusai. There are a few Surimono signed Torin, and it is recorded that one sheet of an illustrated book published in 1798 bears his signature. The Hayashi Catalogue lists one print by him, and the compiler knows of no other, except the one exhibited.

116 TORIN

Bust portrait of Ogino Isaburo as Yuranosuke, the hero of Chushingura (see Numbers 39, 68

役者舞臺之姿繪し海也



豊國
河
市
版

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

and 120), in gray and black against a black ground. The outlines and details of the head are printed without key-block and are indicated by gauffrage.

This print was No. 129 in the London Loan Exhibition of 1915 and is illustrated in Plate XXXV of the Joly and Tomita Catalogue. The same subject, and from the same blocks, is reproduced in the second Manzi Catalogue, No. 380, but that impression is signed "Toyokuni," lacks the black ground, and was published by Marusei, with the name of the actor and the rôle given in cartouches. Probably the original, by the obscure painter Torin, did not sell and the print was re-issued with the substituted signature of the immensely popular Toyokuni whose work it does not resemble.

Signed Kawa Torin.

Publishers Tsutaya and Uemura.

Size $15\frac{1}{4}$ x $10\frac{1}{4}$.

TOYOKUNI (1769-1825)

Toyokuni I, the last great artist of the figure prints, hastened and survived the death of the art. In his later years, yielding to the enormous demand for his work, he produced a great number of designs which were mediocre in themselves and were printed, because of the lowered standard of public taste and the carelessness of the overworked artist, in crude colors. After

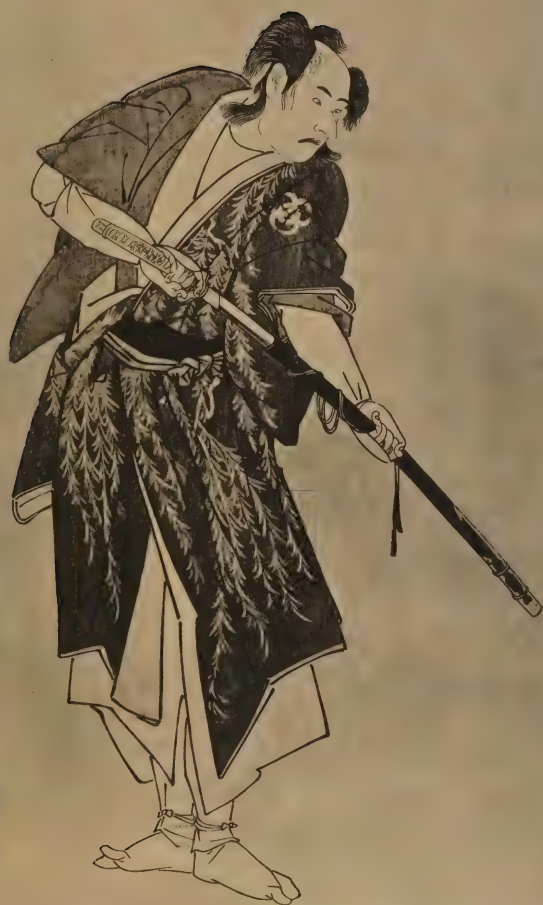
him came the deluge of imitators and pupils and adopters of his name, the ocean of whose works is supposed by the uninitiated to represent the color-printing of Japan. Fortunately, at the very moment when the last good figure prints were being made, the art itself came to new birth in the landscapes of Hokusai and Hiroshige.

In his earlier work, which shows a wide range of subject, Toyokuni is well able to rank with the best of his contemporaries. He drew many lovely portraits of women and scenes of the passing world; but for the purposes of this exhibition, with the limited space available, it seemed wiser to represent Toyokuni more adequately in one phase alone of his work, and for this purpose his standing figures of actors have been chosen, the selection being made chiefly from the best known and finest series—"Portraits of Actors on the Stage."

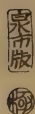
117 TOYOKUNI

The standing figure of an actor whose green outer robe is decorated in yellow with a design of conventionalized cherry-blossoms—the *mon*, or crest, of Michizane, a statesman and poet of the ninth century, who is famous in song and story. There were many plays about him. (See note on Number 21, and under Grolier Club: Catalogue of Landscape Prints, Number 8.) Signed Toyokuni and published by Izumiya. Size 15 x 10.

役者舞臺之姿繪下由と成



豊國画



118 TOYOKUNI

The actor Bando Mitsugorō as a young Samurai, stepping forward with right leg bared.

Print reproduced, "Asia," October, 1923.

Signed Toyokuni and published by Izumiya.

Size $14\frac{1}{2}$ x $9\frac{7}{8}$.

The remaining seven prints are from Toyokuni's finest series, "Portraits of Actors on the Stage," or *Yakusha Butai no Sugata-ye*. All are signed and have the usual publishers' marks and cartouches bearing the titles. They were published about 1795.

119 TOYOKUNI

The 3rd Sawamura Sojurō (Kinokuniya), as the Daimyo of Sendai. He carries a fan and a straw shade hat.

Subject reproduced in color, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. VI, No. 29.

Size $12\frac{1}{2}$ x $10\frac{1}{8}$.

120 TOYOKUNI

Mica ground. The same actor as Yuranosuke (See Numbers 68 and 116.)

Yuranosuke was accustomed to delude the spies of Moronao by pretending intoxication. In this print he is said to be depicted with his clothes on backward; but even though all Japanese actors are more or less double-jointed, and *saké*

THE GROLIER CLUB

is a powerful stimulant, it is difficult to see how anyone could have gotten his head, feet and hand into the relative positions shown. There is some mystery about this print. The kimono of the actor bears the usual Sojurō *mon* (compare Numbers 57, 58); the *mon* on the outer robe, which appears to be falling off him, is that used to indicate Yuranosuke, the hero of "Chushingura," in which so many actors have been depicted.

Subject reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. VI, No. 30.

Size $14\frac{5}{8} \times 9\frac{7}{8}$.

121 TOYOKUNI

The 3rd Segawa Kikunojō (Hamamuraya) as a woman. Compare this print with the next.

Subject reproduced, No. 4, in the "Journal of the Ukiyo-ye Society of Japan," Vol. II, No. 1, November, 1922.

Size $15\frac{3}{8} \times 10\frac{1}{2}$. (Plate XXVI).

122 TOYOKUNI

The same actor, apparently in the same part but differently posed, with different sweep of the draperies and with the black *obi*, or sash tied behind instead of in front as it was in No. 121.

Subject reproduced, V. I. Catalogue, Vol. VI, No. 37.

Size $14\frac{3}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{8}$.

役者舞臺之姿繪入酒付



此
圖
經
京
市
版

JAPANESE FIGURE PRINTS

123 TOYOKUNI

Matsumoto Koshirō as a man of rank.

Subject reproduced, Jacquin Catalogue, No. 653.

Size $15\frac{3}{8}$ x $10\frac{1}{8}$.

124 TOYOKUNI

Mica ground. Bando Mitsugorō drawing his sword.

Subject reproduced, Kinbei Murata Catalogue of October, 1919, No. 82; and "Journal of the Ukiyo-ye Society of Japan," November, 1922. No. 7.

Size $14\frac{3}{4}$ x 10. (Plate XXVII).

125 TOYOKUNI

The 3rd Segawa Kikunojō as a dancer with an open fan in her right hand. (See note on Number 16).

Size $14\frac{1}{2}$ x 10. (Plate XXVIII).





GETTY CENTER LIBRARY



3 3125 00895 1234

